

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 27, 2018

The Honorable Mark T. Esper  
Secretary of the Army  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-1400

Dear Secretary Esper,

We write regarding the conversion of the Army's 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division from an Infantry Brigade Combat Team to an Armored Brigade Combat Team. As this conversion occurs, we also write to express our strong support for the relocation of the 2nd Brigade from Fort Carson, Colorado to one of Texas's premier armor installations. The conversion of an Infantry Brigade Combat Team to an Armored Brigade Combat Team is a daunting task. Nevertheless, as you look across the Army, Fort Hood and Fort Bliss stand out as hosts for a unit of this size and composition.

In recent years, the threats facing our nation from around the globe have grown, and our men and women in uniform have answered our nation's call repeatedly, and often with little notice. Both Fort Hood and Fort Bliss are equipped with the infrastructure necessary to support the rapid deployment and redeployment of our forces. From rail access to the strategic capability of the Robert Gray Airfield and Biggs Army Airfield, both offer the advantage of handling any size aircraft needed for rapid air transportability of personnel and equipment.

As highlighted in your recent study, both installations have the capacity to receive a new Armored Brigade Combat Team due to unit divestitures and reductions in the Army's overall end strength. Until 2013, Fort Hood historically hosted at least five brigade combat teams. Over the last decade, the military personnel strength of Fort Hood has descended from a high of nearly 54,000 Soldiers in 2008, to a low of approximately 35,000 Soldiers today; well under what it can sustain as an installation.

Similarly, Fort Bliss has also faced force reductions and is well positioned to effectively absorb an additional Armored Brigade Combat Team. The Army has invested over \$6 billion in new construction and helped turn Fort Bliss' 1.12 million acre installation into the Army's primary power-projection platform for Overseas Contingency Operations. Fort Bliss is one of two active Mobilization Force Generating Installations (MFGIs) that's able to rapidly support the deployment and redeployment of entire brigades; a testament to the base's ability to support large numbers of troops and equipment.

For families, the State of Texas offers superb quality of life including affordable housing, military friendly communities, recreational activities, and easy access to services. Over the years, our installations and the surrounding communities have worked together to identify and provide the best available resources for Soldiers and their Families assigned to the region.

As the Army prepares to convert 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, Texas' two premier armor installations stand out as the best candidates to serve as their new home. Please keep our office's informed as plans develop or if you have any questions. Thank you for all you do for our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ted Cruz", positioned above a horizontal line.

Ted Cruz  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Cornyn", positioned above a horizontal line.

John Cornyn  
United States Senator

CC:  
United States Army Environmental Command  
ATTN: Public Comments